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ABSTRACT

Research has confirmed the prevalence of depression in women, based on theoretical explanations that encompass genetic/endocrinological factors, the learned helplessness model, the cognitive model of depression, the effects of marital and occupational roles, and/or social discrimination. Women (N=215) completed a questionnaire which examined undesirable life events, occupational and marital roles, learned vulnerability variables of achieving style, dominance in relationship, mastery, attitudes toward feminism, and background variables. Results indicated that employment was not related to depression; among employed women, higher-level occupations were related to lower depression. Divorced or separated women were more depressed than married and never-married women. The occupational groups (professionals, clerical/sales workers, homemakers, semi- and unskilled workers) differed significantly on the suggested vulnerability variables. The best predictors variables for depression were attitudinal mastery, general life dissatisfaction, absence of a confiding relationship, global mastery, and reliant-relational achieving style. The findings suggest that occupational levels need to be differentiated when examining the relationship of women's employment and well-being. (Author/NRB)

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WOMEN'S ROLES AND VULNERABILITY TO DEPRESSION

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Context

According to survey data from the National Institute of Mental Health, approximately 40 million Americans--or 1 in 5--suffer at least moderate depression (Fields, 1980). As early as 1968, Silverman pointed out that "there appear to be no exceptions to the generalization that depression is more common in women than in men, whether it is the feeling of depression, neurotic depression, or depression psychosis" (p. 73). Arieti (1979) estimated the frequency of depression in women as five times greater than that of men. Research has confirmed the prevalence of depression in women (e.g., Gove, 1980; Radloff, 1975; Ilfeld, Note 1). In their review of the sex differences in the epidemiology of depression, covering about 30 Western countries over 40 years (Weissman, 1980), Weissman and Klerman (1977) concluded that depression is indeed more common in women than in men. They suggested that this phenomenon is real and not an artifact of response bias or helpseeking behaviors.

Theoretical explanations regarding the prevalence of depression in women encompass genetic and endocrinological factors, depressogenic variables in women's socialization process, the learned helplessness model, the cognitive model of depression, effects of marital and occupational roles, and actual social discrimination against women. Though complexities in the etiology of depression were recognized, this study was focused on a selection of social-psychological variables in their impact on depression in women.

The socialization process for women typically encourages nurturant, submissive, and conservative aspects of the female role, whereas assertiveness, achievement-orientation, and independence are explicitly discouraged (Block, Von der Lippe, & Block, 1973). Daughters, more so than sons, continue their identification with the mother and thus continue affiliative bonds and dependencies well into adulthood (Hoffman, 1975). Lipman-Blumen and Leavitt (1978) claimed that women frequently learn to achieve through their husband's and

children's accomplishments rather than through their own. This "vicarious achievement ethic" (Lipman-Blumen, 1972) tends to lead women to assume traditional roles in their lives. Due to the patriarchal nature of Western societies, women learn to be submissive to a "male-dominant-other," and become economically, socially, and psychologically dependent (Arieti, 1978). Miller (1976) illustrated how women are expected to serve others' needs and how they "are, in fact, being 'punished' for making affiliations central in their lives" (p. 86). Though affiliation and communion--rather than individualism--may be essential for the future existence of societies, women rarely are rewarded or given status and power for these female strengths.

The learned helplessness model (Seligman, 1975) proposes "that it is not the loss of reinforcers, but the loss of control over reinforcers, that causes depression" (p. 96). Women, more so than men, are socialized to believe that they are helpless, dependent, and have little impact on their environment. In the cognitive model (Beck, 1967), depression is viewed as a distortion in the attribution of events. Depressed individuals blame themselves for negative events and fail to give themselves credit for positive events. Rizley (1978) conducted two experiments to test the contradictory postulates of Seligman's and Beck's models. Results essentially supported Beck's model in that

> depressed subjects rated internal factors (ability and effort) more important causal determinants of an evaluatively negative event (failure) but less important determinants of an evaluatively positive event (success) than did nondepressed subjects. (p. 37)
> . . . depressed subjects self-attributed more interpersonal influence, causality, and, marginally, more responsibility for another individual's behavior change than did nondepressed subjects. (p. 45)

These "depressogenic ways of thinking" are typical for women. In her review of the literature, Frieze (Note 2, in Radloff & Monroe, 1978) found that women see failure as personal and stable, and success as external and unstable; men attribute success to ability, and failure to bad luck or little effort. Miller (1976) illustrated women's beliefs that they should make others successful and

happy, and women's tendencies to blame themselves when this goal proves unattainable. Because of their focus on others, women typically feel more responsible in interpersonal rather than impersonal situations (Alper, 1978). Becker (1977) suggested that "depressives may be like externals in feeling a lack of control over response consequences but like internals in assuming personal responsibility for adverse outcomes" (p. 155). These tendencies again may be stronger in women due to traditional female socialization.

The effects of marital roles may influence the prevalence of depression in women. Bernard (1973) reviewed the mental health of women and stated that the roles of wife and mother, combined with economic dependence, are hazardous to the health of women. Radloff (1975) and Gove (1972) concluded that marriage is better for men than for women, as married women were consistently more depressed than married men; among the widowed and never-married, men were more depressed than women. Weissman and Klerman (1977) stated that "elements of the traditional female roles may contribute to depression" (p. 109).

Occupational status has been related to women's well-being. Highly educated employed women reported more self-esteem and lower depression when compared to highly educated homemakers (Birnbaum 1975; Sears & Barbee, 1977). When focusing on working-class women, the effects of employment on health are less clear, though some authors reported protective effects of employment on well-being (Ferree, 1976; Mostow & Newberry, 1975; Tebbets, 1980). However, large scale studies in the general population (Campbell, Converse & Rodgers, 1976; Pearlin, 1975; Radloff, 1975; Wright, 1978) found no consistent differences in well-being between employed women and homemakers. Guttentag and Salasin (1976) described the powerlessness of the low-income mother:

> . . . her entry into the labor force, in a low-level job, has meant that she must fulfill all of the traditional family role requirements, and, in addition, she works at a poorly paid and unsatisfactory job. . . . No wonder she feels trapped and powerless. The situation for the divorced or separated low-income mother is even worse. (p. 174)

Weissman (1980) suggested the "social-status-hypothesis" as one of the plausible explanations for the prevalence of depression in women:

> . . . real social discrimination makes it difficult for them to achieve mastery by direct action and self-assertion . . . these inequities lead to legal and economic helplessness, dependency on others, chronic low self-esteem, low aspirations, and ultimately, clinical depression. (p. 102)

The combination of women's depressogenic socialization--lack of direct achievement, high interpersonal responsibility, differential attribution of success and failure, and economic and psychological dependencies--combined with actual discrimination may well serve as some of the valid explanations why so many women are depressed in Western cultures.

Purpose of the Study

The conceptualization of depression employed in this study was based on Brown and Harris's (1978) psychosocial model:

> . . . the provoking agents influence when the depression occurs, the vulnerability factors whether these agents will have an effect, and the symptom-formation factors the severity and form of the depressive disorder itself. (pp. 270-271)

As depression was found to be related to the experience of undesirable life events (Paykel, 1974), the "provoking agents" were assessed with the Psychiatric Epidemiology Research Interview (PERI) Life Events Scale (Dohrenwend, Krasnoff, Askenasy, & Dohrenwend, 1978), using a time period of the past 6 months (Dohrenwend, Note 3). Though problems with measuring life changes rather than long-term stressful life conditions have been noted (Makosky, in press), the PERI was selected; life condition measures were not yet available at the time of this project. The "symptom-formation factors" were assessed with the Center for Epidemiological Surveys Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977). This self-report scale serves as a rough indicator of clinical depression in general population samples (Myers & Weissman, 1980).

Due to traditional female socialization, women learn to achieve and feel

responsible in interpersonal situations, to depend on a "dominant-other" (Arieti, 1979), to develop a low sense of mastery, and to view homemaking and child care as their main roles. Given these aspects of female socialization, it may be difficult for women to develop attitudes of self-determination and power. Therefore, the following variables were identified as possible vulnerability factors: (a) high relational achieving style combined with low direct and total achieving style, (b) perceived dominance of partner and low egalitarian relationship, (c) powerlessness orientation, and (d) stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles. For these variables, a continuum was suggested, ranging from vulnerability factors to protective factors. The protective cluster was considered as (a) relational achieving style combined with high direct and total achieving style, (b) low perceived dominance of partner and high egalitarian relationship, (c) mastery orientation, and (d) liberal attitudes toward women's roles. It was expected that liberal attitudes would allow for choice in one's roles, whereas stereotypical attitudes would restrict one to societal role expectations.

The purpose of the study was to examine whether certain learned vulnerability variables were in fact related to depression. In addition, the following background variables were examined: occupational and marital status, age, family income, personal income, educational level, occupational prestige, ethnic background, number of children at home, presence of a confiding relationship, and satisfaction with social and general life.

It was hypothesized that the potential vulnerability factors and depression would be distributed differently among four occupational groups--(a) professionals, (b) clerical/sales workers, (c) homemakers, (d) semi/unskilled workers--and among the three marital status groups--(a) married women, (b) never-married women, (c) divorced/separated women. Employment as a professional (and to a lesser degree as a clerical/sales worker) was expected to

be related to lower depression, lower perceived dominance of partner, higher total and direct achieving styles, higher mastery orientations, and liberal attitudes toward women's roles. Semi/unskilled workers (and to a lesser degree, homemakers) were expected to report higher levels of depression, higher perceived dominance of partner, low mastery orientations (or powerlessness), and stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles. Homemakers were expected to report lowest direct and total achieving styles due to their relative lack of involvement outside of the home. Figure 1 presents the hypothesized ordering of means for the four occupational groups on depression and on the vulnerability factors.

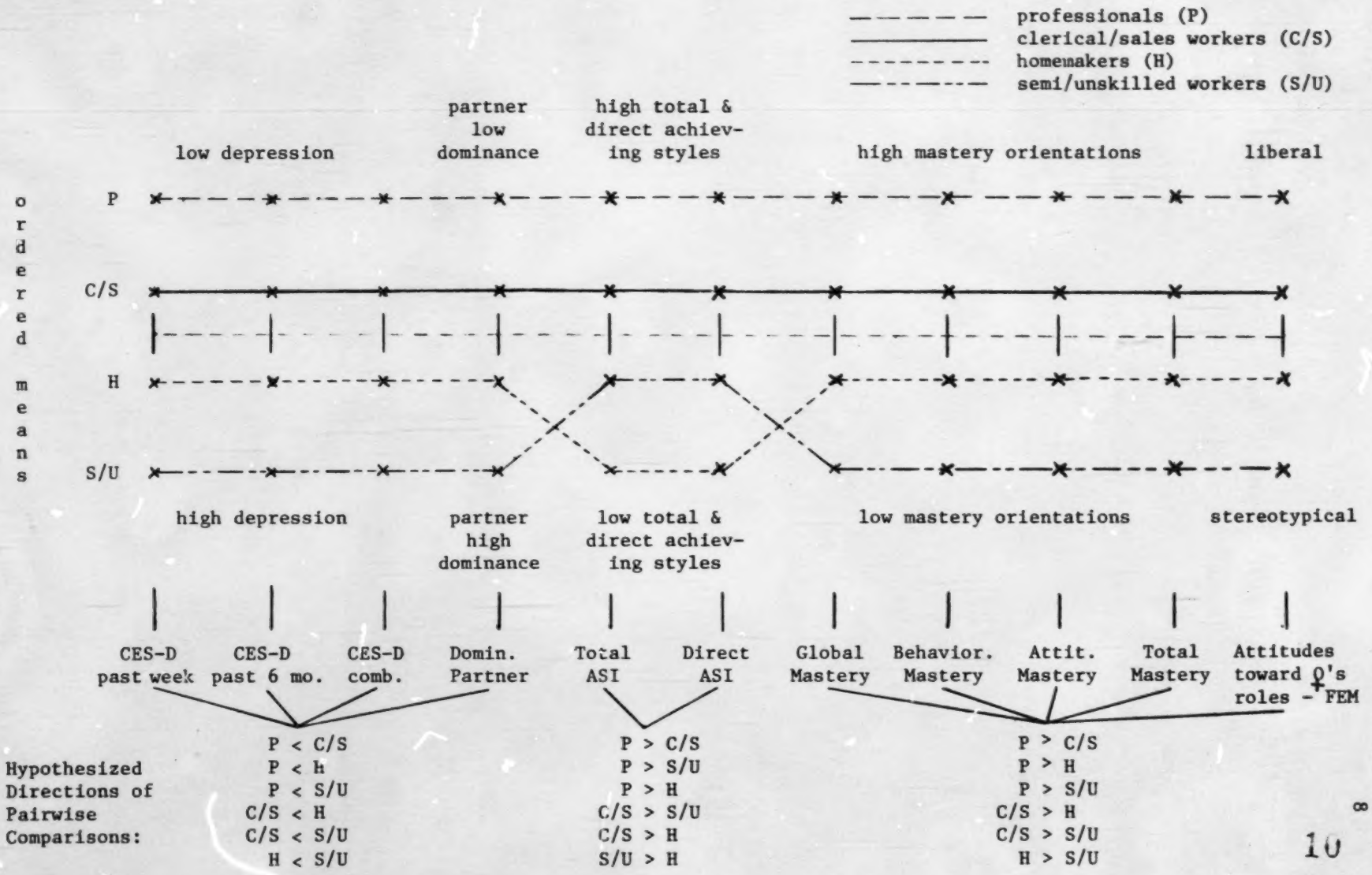
For the three marital status groups, ordered differences were not hypothesized, as there were no clear trends in the literature suggesting such hypotheses. However, because studies have shown a high frequency of depression among divorced/separated women, it was expected that depression would vary as a function of marital status as well as of occupational status.

Method

A stratified random sample of women was drawn from the directory of Kalamazoo County, Michigan. The women were contacted by phone, given a brief explanation of the purpose of the study, and were asked whether they fell within the age range of 25 to 50. They were also asked whether they were full-time employed and, if so, in what type of occupation. They were further asked whether they would be willing to fill out a confidential 12-page questionnaire. The final sample consisted of 240 women who were full-time employed as professionals (n = 60), clerical/sales workers (n = 60), semi/unskilled workers (n = 60), or homemakers (n = 60). A mailed questionnaire was employed, containing the following instruments: (a) the PERI Life Events Scale, (b) the CFS-D Scale (to measure depression over the past week and depression over the

Figure 1

Occupation, Depression, and Vulnerability Variables in Women--HYPOTHESES



past 6 months), (c) the Achieving Styles Inventory (ASI; Handley-Isaksen, Lipman-Blumen, Leavitt, Patterson, Bies, Kofodimos, Brunner, & Reynolds, Note 4), (d) the Lu-Dominance-Submission Scale (Lu, 1950; revised in this study), (e) the Mastery/Powerlessness Scale (M/P; Liberman, 1978), and (f) the FEM-Scale (attitudes toward women's roles; Smith, Ferree, & Miller, 1975). The questionnaire also asked for selected background information.

Statistical procedures included: analyses of variance for the non-directional hypotheses, ordered means analyses of variance (Stoline, 1981; See Appendix) for the ordered means hypotheses, and a two-way analysis of covariance to examine depression as a function of both occupational and marital status while controlling for undesirable life events. Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were calculated for depression with the vulnerability variables, and for depression with selected background variables. Multiple regression analyses were employed to discover variables predictive of depression.

Results

Of the 240 participating women, 215 (89.6%) completed and returned the questionnaire. Responses were received from 58 of the professionals (96%), 55 of the clerical/sales workers (91.7%), 54 of the homemakers (90%), and 48 of the semi/unskilled workers (80%). Occupational groups were distributed as follows: 27% were professionals, 25.6% were clerical/sales workers, 25.1% were homemakers, and 22.3% were semi/unskilled workers. One hundred thirty-three women were married (61.9%), 55 were divorced/separated (25.6%), and 27 were never-married (12.6%).

Of the professionals, 31 were married (53.4%), 20 were divorced/separated (34.5%), and 7 were never-married (12.1%). Of the clerical/sales workers, 33 women were married (60%), 10 were divorced/separated (18.2%),

and 12 were never-married (21.8%). Of the homemakers, 49 were married (90.7%), 4 were divorced/separated (7.4%), and 1 woman was never-married (1.9%). Of the semi/unskilled workers, 20 were married (41.7%), 21 were divorced/separated (43.8%), and 7 were never-married (14.6%).

Of the sample, 9.3% were minority group members: 12 Blacks (5.6%), 2 Spanish Americans (.9%), 2 Native Americans (.9%), and 4 Orientals (1.9%). Of the 12 Blacks, 8 were semi/unskilled workers (66.7%) 2 were professionals (16.7%), 1 was a clerical/sales worker (8.3%), and 1 was a homemaker (8.3%).

In the following sections, results are reported at or below a significance level of $\alpha = .05$, unless otherwise specified. Table 1 presents an overview of results regarding undesirable life events, depression, and vulnerability variables for the occupational and marital status groups. In Table 1, the groups are listed in the obtained group mean order and not necessarily in the predicted order. The group names are abbreviated as follows: P = professional, H = homemaker, C/S = clerical/sales worker, and S/U = semi/unskilled worker; M = married, NM = never-married, and DS = divorced/separated. Underlining of groups indicates nonsignificance for the protected LSD pairwise comparisons at $\alpha = .05$. The symbol < indicates directional differences between the group mean scores, which may or may not be significant as indicated by the absence or presence of underlining.

Table 1

Overview of Results: Undesirable Life Events, Depression, Vulnerability Variables, and Background Variables Among Occupational Groups and Among Marital Status Groups

Variable:	Occupational Groups	Marital Groups (AOV or AOC)
1. Undesirable Life Events (AOV)	H < P < S/U < C/S ns	M < NM < DS *
2. Occupational Prestige (AOV)	H < S/U < C/S < P *	M < DS < NM ns
3. Education (AOV)	S/U < H < C/S < P *	DS < M < NM ns
4. Family Income (AOV)	S/U < C/S < P < H *	DS < NM < M *
5. Personal Income (AOV)	H < C/S < S/U < P *	M < DS < NM *

Table 1 (Continued)

Variable:	Occupational Groups	Marital Groups (AOV or AOC)
6. Absence of Confiding Relation (AOV)	P < H < C/S < S/U *	M < DS < NM ns
7. Children under 6 yrs. at home (AOV)	C/S < P < S/U < H *	NM < DS < M *
8. Social Dissatisfaction (AOV)	P < H < C/S < S/U *	M < NM < DS *
9. Life Dissatisfaction (AOV)	H < P < C/S < S/U *	M < NM < DS *
10. Depression (3 measures) (ordered means AOV)	P < H < C/S < S/U *	M < NM < DS *
11. Depression over past week (2-way ANCOVA)	P < H < C/S < S/U *	M < NM < DS *
12. Perceived Dominance of Self (AOV)	C/S < H < P < S/U ns	NM < DS < M ns
13. Perceived Dominance of Partner (ordered means AOV)	P < H < S/U < C/S *	NM < DS < M ns
14. Relative Dominance of Partner in Relation (AOV) (Partner minus Self)	P < S/U < H < C/S *	DS < M < NM ns
15. Total Achieving Style (ordered means AOV)	H < S/U < C/S < P *	NM < M < DS ns
16. Direct Achieving Style (ordered means AOV)	H < S/U < C/S < P *	M < NM < DS ns
17. Relational Achieving Style (AOV)	C/S < H < S/U < P ns	MN < DS < M ns
18. Global Mastery (ordered means AOV)	S/U < C/S < H < P *	NM < DS < M ns
19. Behavioral Mastery (ordered means AOV)	S/U < H < C/S < P *	NM < DS < M *
20. Attitudinal Mastery (ordered means AOV)	S/U < C/S < H < P *	NM < M < DS ns
21. Total Mastery (ordered means AOV)	S/U < C/S < H < P *	NM < DS < M ns
22. Attitudes toward Women's Roles (ordered means AOV)	S/U < H < C/S < P *	M < DS < NM ns

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates significance of the overall F-test (AOV, AOC) or E^2-test (ordered means AOV) at or below $\alpha = .05$ or at or below $P = .05$; ns indicates nonsignificance of the overall tests at $\alpha = .05$ or at $P = .05$. Groups which are not underlined differ significantly from each other at or below $\alpha = .05$. For example, on the last variable, 22, Attitudes toward Women's Roles, all pairwise group comparisons are significant at or below $\alpha = .05$.

Occupational groups did not differ in undesirable life events at $\alpha = .74$. Therefore, all four groups experienced similar levels of undesirable life events. However, Makosky (in press) pointed out that the crucial depressogenic variables may not be undesirable life events but, instead, long-term stressful life conditions. Long-term conditions considered in this study were occupational and marital status, family income, personal income, educational level, occupational prestige, number of children at home, and absence of a confiding relationship. However, other possibly stressful conditions--poor housing, lack of child care facilities, or physical disabilities--were not included in this study. The results for the long-term life conditions among the occupational and among the marital groups are reported in Table 1, variables 2-7.

Marital status groups differed significantly in their experience of undesirable life events: married women indicated fewer undesirable life events than never-married and divorced/separated women; never-married women reported fewer undesirable life events than divorced/separated women.

Professionals were less depressed than clerical/sales workers and semi/unskilled workers, but did not differ significantly from homemakers on depression over the past week, depression over the past 6 months, and on the combined depression measure. On the vulnerability variables, professionals perceived their partners as less dominant than did the clerical/sales workers and semi/unskilled workers, but did not differ significantly from the homemakers. Professionals reported the highest degree of direct and total achieving styles; homemakers reported the lowest. No differences were found in relational achieving style and perceived dominance of self among the four occupational groups. Semi/unskilled workers scored lowest in mastery; professionals scored highest. Stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles ranged from low to high, in the order of: professionals < clerical/sales workers <

homemakers < semi/unskilled workers. Despite fairly liberal attitudes toward women's roles, clerical/sales workers perceived their partners as most dominant. Unexpectedly, semi/unskilled workers perceived themselves as relatively dominant in their relationships.

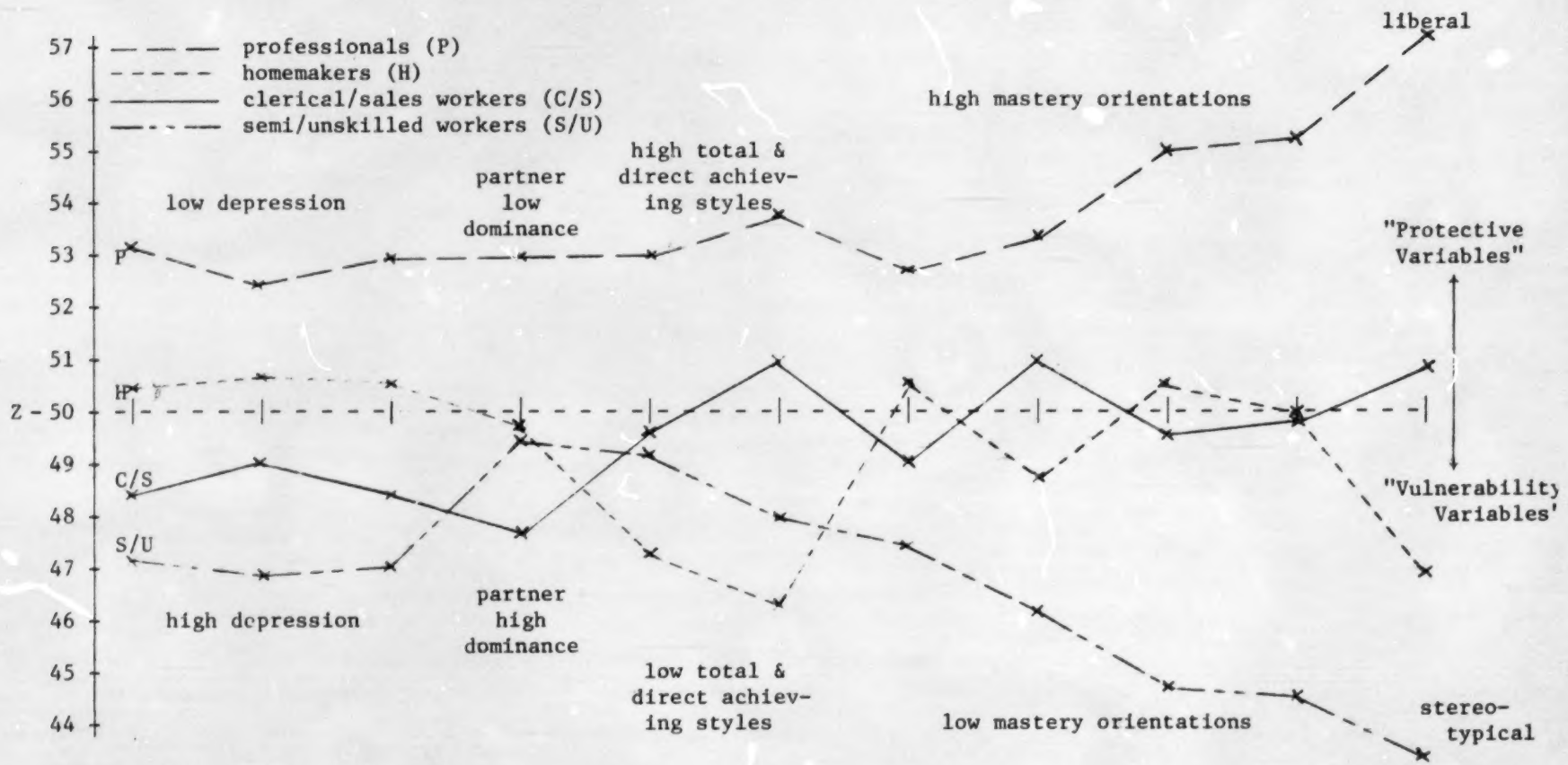
No significant differences were found between never-married and married women in the three depression measures. However, divorced/separated women were significantly more depressed than never-married and married women. On the vulnerability variables, the married, never-married, and divorced/separated women did not differ significantly in achieving styles, perceived dominance of self and of partner, in mastery orientations (with the exception of behavioral mastery), or in attitudes toward women's roles.

Figure 2 reports the results of the ordered means analyses of variance for the four occupational groups. Group mean scores were transformed into Z-scores. This figure depicts the relative standing of the four occupational groups on both the depression and vulnerability measures. In Figure 2, the symbol (r) indicates a situation in which the obtained group mean order was different than the expected order. Examining Table 1 and Figure 2, the following generalizations can be made about each of the four occupational groups.

As expected, professionals were least depressed. The "protective" cluster consisted of low perceived dominance of partner, high direct (especially power-direct) achieving styles, high mastery, and high liberal attitudes toward women's roles. Professionals reported a fairly high family income, the highest personal income, highest levels of education and occupational prestige, were most satisfied with their social life and fairly satisfied with their general life, and reported the highest level of confiding relationship with their significant person. Confiding relationship was defined as trusting one's partner, viewing one's partner as available for communication, and believing that one's partner is interested in what matters to

Figure 2

Occupation, Depression, and Vulnerability Variables in Women--RESULTS
(group mean scores transormed to Z-scores)



Comparisons (r = reversal)	CES-D past week	CES-D past 6 mo.	CES-D comb.	Domin. Partner	Total ASI	Direct ASI	Global MP	Beh. MP	Attit. MP	Total MP	Att. Q's roles FEM
P-----H	.07	.18	.11	.06	.00*	.00*	.11	.01*	.01*	.00*	.00*
P----C/S	.01*	.04*	.01*	.00*	.05*	.07	.03*	.10	.00*	.00*	.00*
P----S/U	.00*	.00*	.00*	.04*	.04*	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*	.00*
C/S---H	.81(r)	.78(r)	.85(r)	.87(r)	.12	.01*	.77(r)	.12	.75(r)	.54(r)	.01*
H----S/U	.06	.04*	.05*	.42	.21	.21	.06	.10	.00*	.00*	.03*
C/S--S/U	.23	.14	.24	.81(r)	.39	.08	.21	.01*	.01*	.00*	.00*

α for directional t-test

oneself.

Unexpectedly, homemakers reported fairly low levels of depression, fairly high mastery, viewed their partners as fairly egalitarian, reported --as expected--lowest levels of direct and total achieving styles, and fairly stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles. As the family income of the homemaker group was highest, the "average" homemaker in this sample probably saw no economic necessity to be employed. Though their educational level was fairly low, homemakers were most satisfied with their general life and fairly satisfied with their social life. They reported rather high confiding relationships with their significant person. As expected, homemakers had the highest number of children overall, and the highest number of children under age 6.

For the clerical/sales workers, the suggested "protective" cluster was mixed: Though fairly high in direct and total achieving styles, behavioral mastery, and in liberal attitudes toward women's roles, the clerical/sales workers viewed their partners as most dominant, reported fairly low levels of attitudinal, global, and total mastery, and fairly high levels of depression. Their family income was low (only the family income of semi/unskilled workers was lower), and their personal income was lowest. Though their educational and occupational levels were rather high, their social satisfaction and satisfaction with general life were fairly low. Clerical/sales workers reported low confiding relationships with their significant person.

Semi/unskilled workers--as expected--were most depressed, reported lowest levels of mastery, and the highest stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles. Unexpectedly, they viewed their partners as fairly low in dominance, and their relationships as fairly egalitarian. Their personal income was slightly higher (though not statistically significant) than that of the clerical/sales workers. For most semi/unskilled workers, paid employment was

probably a necessity, as their family income was the lowest of the four occupational groups. They reported the lowest educational level, low occupational prestige (homemakers were lowest), and were most dissatisfied with their social and general life. Semi/unskilled workers had significantly more children under 6 years of age than did the clerical/sales workers.

Though undesirable life events may "trigger" depression (Brown & Harris, 1978; Paykel, 1974), controlling for the effects of undesirable life events facilitates the examination of long-term stressful conditions possibly associated with certain occupational and marital roles. Therefore, a two-way analysis of covariance was employed, with undesirable life events as the covariate, the occupational and marital levels as the variates, and depression as the dependent variable. No significant interaction effect was found between occupational and marital status. Professionals were less depressed than the three other occupational groups, and never-married and married women were less depressed than the divorced/separated women on the "past week" depression measure. For both depression over the past 6 months, and for the combined depression measure, the assumption of homogeneous slopes for the analysis of covariance was not met, and no further analyses were employed. Figures 3 and 4 show the adjusted group means for the occupational and marital status groups on depression over the past week.

As shown in Figures 3 and 4, highest in depression over the past week were the semi/unskilled workers and clerical/sales workers who were divorced or separated. In the group of divorced/separated women, the professionals were lowest in depression; in fact, they reported slightly lower levels of depression over the past week (though not statistically significant) than the married semi/unskilled workers and the married clerical/sales workers. Previous surveys of the general population found no differences in well-being between employed women and homemakers, which may be due to lack of differentiation

Figure 3

Adjusted Means for Depression Over the Past Week:
Marital-by-Occupational Status

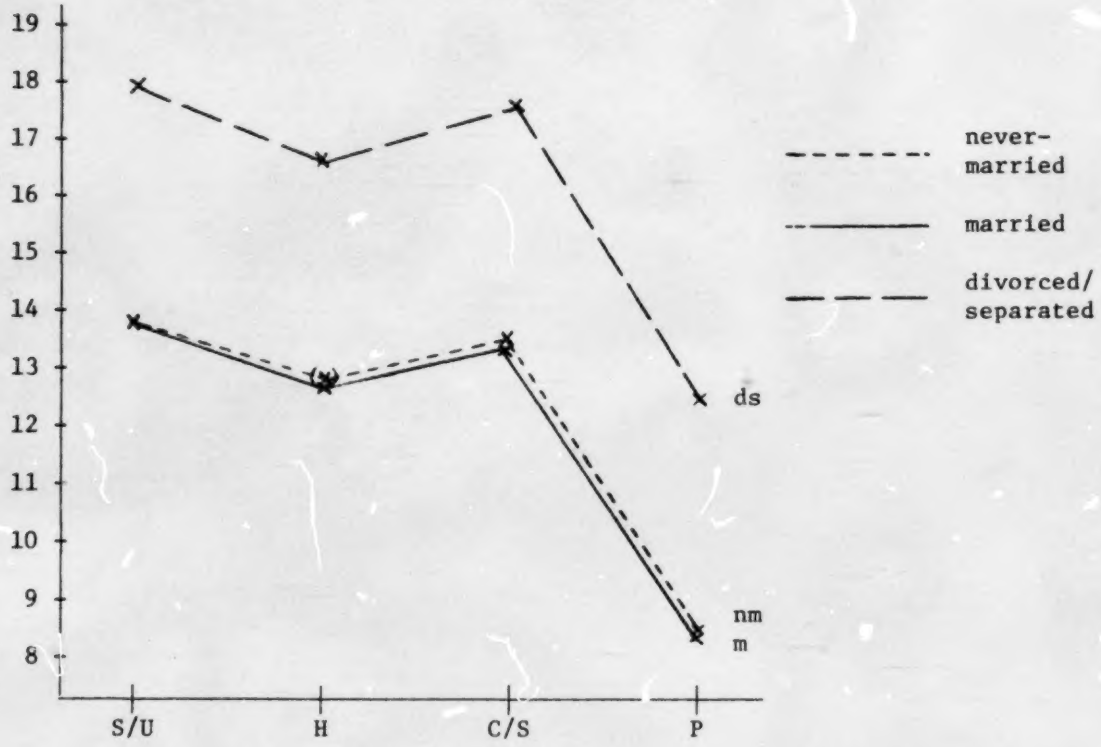
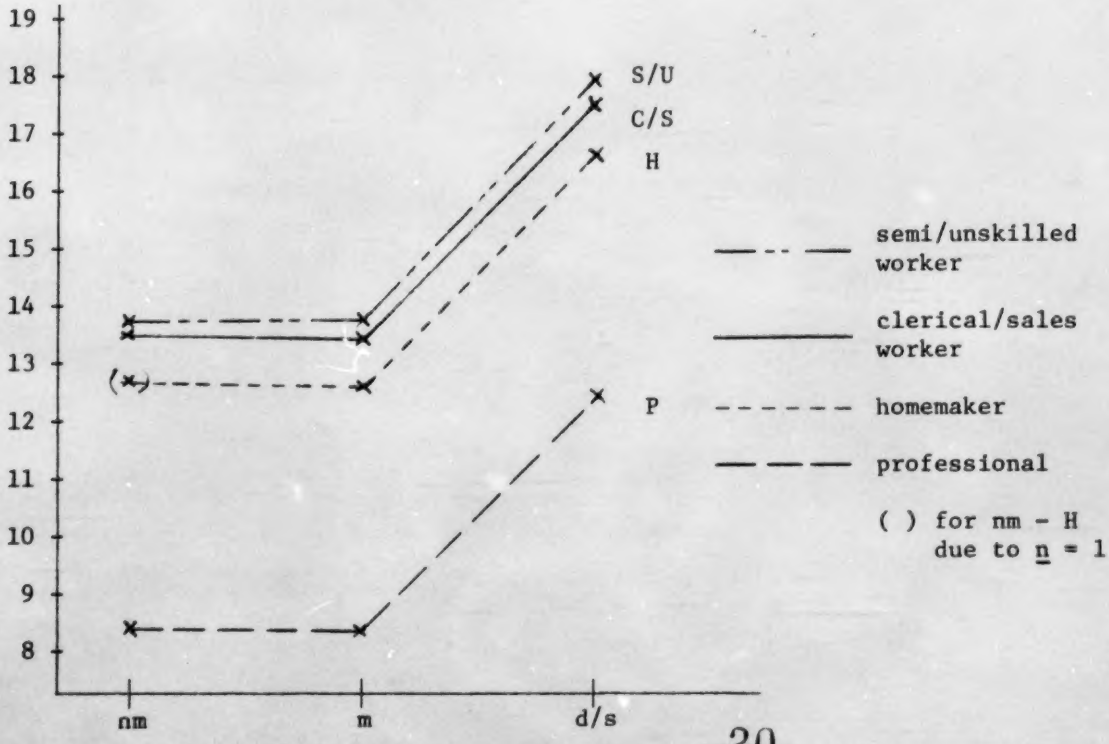


Figure 4

Adjusted Means for Depression Over the Past Week:
Occupational-by-Marital Status



between marital and occupational statuses.

Findings regarding relations among vulnerability variables and depression are presented below.

When examining the role of achieving styles (Lipman-Blumen, Leavitt, Patterson, Bies, & Handley-Isaksen, in press), the following relations were found. The direct domain of the achieving styles, though not related to depression, was positively related to liberal attitudes toward women's roles, to high mastery, and to perceived dominance of self. Direct achieving styles were not related to perceived dominance of partner. The relational domain of achieving styles was not related to depression, mastery, perceived dominance, or attitudes toward women's roles. Women who reported a sense of control and taking charge (power-direct style), and of taking an active and supportive role in accomplishments (contributory-relational style), tended to be less depressed, had a higher sense of mastery, and reported liberal attitudes toward women's roles. Women who viewed themselves in need of others' help for achievements (reliant relational style), who viewed accomplishments as means to other ends (instrumental direct style), and who, to a lesser degree, sought a social context for achievements (collaborative relational style), tended to be more depressed, to have less of a sense of mastery, and to have more stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles. Not related to depression were high task-orientation (intrinsic direct), competitiveness (competitive direct), using relationships in order to achieve (instrumental relational), and perceiving and taking pleasure in others' accomplishments (vicarious relational).

When examining the role of perception of one's partner as dominant, perceived dominance of partner was--as expected--positively related to depression. Unexpectedly, however, perceived dominance of self was also positively related to depression. Neither of the variables were related to mastery or to attitudes

toward women's roles. When examining the role of mastery, low behavioral, low attitudinal, and low total mastery orientations were related to high depression and to stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles. Global mastery was not related to depression, but had a strong inverse relation to stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles.

Though not related to depression, stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles were inversely related to the four mastery orientations, and thereby may indirectly increase one's vulnerability to depression. However, as correlation coefficients do not lend themselves to causal explanations, more elaborate analyses need to be employed to suggest potential directional relationships among the variables.

Other variables were inversely related to depression: higher educational level, higher occupational prestige, higher family income, and the presence of a confiding relationship with one's significant person. Personal income had a slightly negative relation to depression. Describing oneself as dissatisfied with one's social and general life was positively related to depression. Black women were more depressed than other minority women and white women.

Best predictors for depression were: attitudinal mastery, which accounted for 12.4% of the variance on depression over the past week; general life dissatisfaction, which accounted for 29.4% of the variance on the three depression measures; absence of a confiding relationship, which accounted for 10.7% on depression over the past 6 months; global mastery, which accounted for 9.2% of the variance on the combined depression measure; and reliant-relational achieving style, which accounted for 5.7% of the variance on depression over the past week. Depression scores decreased with increasing scores in attitudinal and global mastery. Depression scores increased with increasing scores in absence of a confiding relationship, general life dissatisfaction, and reliant relational achieving style.

Conclusions

The underlying concept of this study was: if certain learned vulnerability variables--high relational achieving style combined with low direct achieving style, perception of one's partner as dominant and of oneself as submissive, low mastery orientation, and stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles--form a cluster which occurs more frequently in certain occupational roles rather than in others, and which in fact is related to depression, then steps would be made toward a social-psychological model for further understanding women's increased vulnerability to depression.

Based on the results reported so far, various suggestions are possible. In this paper, only a few preliminary conclusions are discussed. Reactions and suggestions from the readers of this paper are invited.

The first assumption, that certain variables would be related to depression, was met: needing others' help for accomplishments, low sense of mastery, more stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles (indirectly related), viewing oneself and one's partner as dominant, low educational level, low occupational prestige, low family income, dissatisfaction with social and general life, and lack of a confiding relationship all were related to depression. The unexpected result--that perception of self as dominant was positively related to depression--suggests several possible explanations: (a) Perceived dominance may indicate more a sense of frustration and anger, and possibly does not increase one's sense of mastery or control; semi/unskilled workers reported the lowest levels of mastery, and viewed themselves as fairly dominant in their relationships. (b) Most black women were semi/unskilled workers; it may be that ethnicity affects perceived dominance in one's relationship. (c) The majority of the semi/unskilled workers (58.4%) were not married, and may have thought of their "significant person" in terms of a

child or friend, who, by nature of the relationship, may have been less dominant. (d) Many women of the working class maintain the family unit as both breadwinners and homemakers. This may well contribute to a sense of dominance, at least in relation to significant persons in one's life. This sense of dominance, however, seems to have no carry-over to increased sense of mastery in one's life. Aversive work-conditions and economic struggles may keep women at a level of barely coping. Their opportunities to actively change work and personal environments may be severely limited.

The expectation--that high relational achieving style combined with low direct and total achieving style would be related to depression--was met only partially. Power and a sense of contributing were associated with lower depression, whereas needing others for accomplishments, viewing achievements as means to other ends, and seeking mainly a social context for achievements were associated with higher depression. Thus, only "helplessness" and lack of enjoyment in achievement per se were related to depression, whereas enjoying others' accomplishments was not. A contributory relational style was inversely related to depression. Miller's (1976) observations may help to integrate these findings. She pointed out that women's typical strengths of affiliation and communion, when used exclusively to please men, lead into subservience and lack of freedom. "It is only when the woman can move away from thinking of first pleasing another and conforming to his desires and expectations that she can even begin to know herself. With the economic and psychological realities today, this risk is still huge" (p. 110). When adding power and self-determination to the strengths in contributory relational styles, and when "reclaiming conflict" (Miller, 1976) as a growth-producing rather than a destructive force, contributions to a psychologically healthier environment for all people may be made.

As expected, a low sense of mastery was directly related to higher

depression. Stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles were indirectly related to depression. Having to be employed out of economic necessity while viewing one's proper role to be at home (see the variables for the semi/unskilled workers) may contribute to depression. On the other hand, homemakers reported fairly stereotypical attitudes toward women's roles, were fairly low in depression and were most satisfied with their general life. The "average" homemaker reported the highest family income--even higher than that of the professionals--and probably saw no economic need to be employed herself. Apparently, as long as the husband has a good income, some women may choose to fulfill the traditional roles of homemaker and mother, especially when having children of preschool age at home, and thus feel satisfied with their lives. At the moment of separation or divorce, however, lack of education and previous occupational experience may be devastating in their consequences. This phenomenon is apparent in the high levels of depression among divorced/separated clerical/sales workers and divorced/separated semi/unskilled workers, who lack financial and emotional support (lowest family income and low confiding relationships with significant person).

The effects of marital status on one's well-being were as follows. Married and never-married women did not differ in depression. However, never-married women's family income was lower than that of the married women, and the never-married women were also less satisfied with their general life than were the married women. Divorce or separation clearly is a difficult experience for most women, as the divorced/separated women were most depressed and most dissatisfied with their lives. A variable which appears to mediate the effects of divorce is one's occupational status; professional women who were divorced or separated were actually a bit less depressed than were married or never-married clerical/sales workers or semi/unskilled workers. As pointed out earlier, highest in depression were the divorced/separated lower-income

workers--i.e., the semi/unskilled and the clerical/sales workers.

As the family income of the homemaker group was higher than that of the three employed groups, it is likely that most women--professionals included--are employed for the same reasons as men: to support their families and themselves. Given the fact that 90% of all women in the United States work at some point in their lives, young women may well be advised to take their careers more seriously than traditional socialization messages would suggest. The importance of a woman's career, and the depressogenic potential of low-income jobs, are illustrated in this study; women employed as professionals--whether married, never-married, or divorced/separated--were clearly less depressed and more satisfied with their lives than were women employed as clerical/sales workers or semi/unskilled workers. Due to the descriptive nature of the study, the "chicken or egg" question cannot be answered: are women less depressed because they are professionals, or are less depressed women more likely to function as professionals? Regardless of directionality, however, professional employment was related to a high sense of mastery, power-direct achieving style, high levels of satisfaction, and low depression. Professional women probably had integrated their employment into their self-view because they reported liberal attitudes toward women's roles. It seems safe to conclude that employment as a professional, with higher levels of education, occupational prestige, and personal income, may serve to "protect" women against depression.

Several implications for therapy and social programs and policies can be proposed. Women who become divorced may face severe financial cuts. Educational and training programs, financial aid, and day care facilities are essential in assisting "displaced homemakers" and re-entry women to find satisfying occupations. Long-term preventive approaches to epidemiological depression in women would require changes in educational, employment, and

other social policies. School curricula need to emphasize adult roles of occupation, homemaking, and parenting for women and men alike. As women and men share more equally the responsibilities of child rearing, employers will have to offer child-care facilities for employed parents. Employment policies will have to include paternity leaves for fathers as well as maternity leaves for mothers. In order to decrease the isolation of depressed low-income mothers, support groups and consciousness-raising groups need to be integrated into the counseling process. Thus, depressed women could learn to decrease their self-blame and to move from "coping with stress and depression" to participation in social action programs which facilitate more livable environments for presently disadvantaged groups.

As important as it is for women to learn to care for themselves, financially and psychologically, this does not mean that the traditional womanly strengths of affiliation and communion must be given up. In fact, continued societal valueing of individualistic power and automony may well foster the decline of human existence and--in the final analysis--of all other living organisms. Instead, women and men alike need to develop and maintain close and intimate relationships with others to foster societal and individual well-being. Findings of this study suggest that women who have a close confiding relationship with a significant person are less depressed--regardless of occupational and marital status. Interestingly enough, professional women as a group reported higher confiding relationships than the homemakers, clerical/sales workers, and the semi/unskilled workers. It is tempting to speculate that a sense of mastery and competence in one's own occupation may give one the strength to "reclaim conflict" as growth-producing (Miller, 1976), to move toward more egalitarian relationships, and to develop more authenticity and self-determination. These factors also increase the potential for true intimacy in one's relationships. However, being forced into employment for

economic reasons while desiring to be a full-time homemaker, having access to only low-income jobs due to little education and opportunities, having little sense of impact on one's work environment due to an unresponsive work-setting or subservient work-roles, and lacking a supportive confiding relationship with a significant person are all factors which probably account, at least in part, for the high frequency of depression especially in economically disadvantaged groups of women. Gaining access to higher-level occupations may be a crucial factor in decreasing epidemiological depression in women. Employment which fosters a sense of impact and mastery, close affiliation in one's relationships, neither perceiving oneself nor one's partner as dominant, and a sense of freedom in choosing one's roles, may constitute a viable "protective package" against depression in women.

A Personal Note

The following thoughts by Rilke--an early feminist (1875-1926)--on separateness and closeness are shared with those who want to read them. Rilke pointed out that traditional marriage and "togetherness" frequently are ". . . a narrowing, a reciprocal agreement which robs either one party or both of his [her] fullest freedom and development. But, once the realization is accepted that even between the closest human beings infinite distances continue to exist, [and] a wonderful living side by side can grow up, if they succeed in loving the distance between them which makes it possible for each to see the other whole and against a wide sky." He fully acknowledged the human strengths of women: ". . . [the] humanity of woman, born its full time in suffering and humiliation, will come to light when she will have stripped off the conventions of mere femininity in the mutations of her outward status, and those men who do not yet feel it approaching today will be surprised and struck by it. . . . This advance will . . . change the love-experience . . . into a relation that

is meant to be of one human being to another. . . . And this more human love . . . consists in this, that two solitudes protect and border and salute each other" (In Mood, 1975, pp. 36-37)

Finding ways to integrate separateness and closeness in one's life may seem an overwhelming task. However, as Rilke stated:

> If only we arrange our life according
> to that principle which counsels us
> that we must always hold to the difficult,
> then that which now still seems to us
> the most alien will become what we
> most trust and find most faithful. (In Mood, 1975, p. 1)

Rather than having to have all the answers, Rilke encourages ". . . to try to love the questions themselves, . . . [to] live the questions now. Perhaps [one] . . . will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer" (Mood, 1975, p. 25).

Appendix

Stoline (1981) developed a program which deals with up to four means and tests whether at least one of the means differs from a predetermined ordering of means: $\mu_1 \leq \mu_2 \leq \mu_3 \leq \mu_4$. The program is based on Bartholomew's (Barlow, Bartholomew, Bremner, & Brunk, 1972) approach to testing the equality of ordered means via the likelihood ratio tests in the normal case. This program calculates an E^2 - statistic which has an associated estimated probability value P. If $P > .05$, then the null hypothesis $H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4$, is accepted at $P = .05$ level of significance, and no further testing is employed. If $P < .05$, then the null hypothesis is rejected. Follow-up pairwise comparison tests consist of one-tailed directional t-test, each at $\alpha = .05$, to determine in which of the three adjacent pairwise comparisons there are significant differences in the hypothesized direction.

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